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SUBSTITUTE SPECIFICATION
-- MARKED-UP VERSION --

DESCRIPTION
METHOD OF CALIBRATING LIGAND SPECIFICITY

Technical Field

The present invention relates to analyzing a basic
5 ~~technology in~~ intermolecular interactions using a solid phase
carrier. More specifically, the present invention relates to ~~a~~
~~technology to select and purify~~ selecting and purifying a
molecule exhibiting a specific interaction with a molecule to
be analyzed, or to analyze a specific interaction between
10 molecules, by immobilizing the molecule to be analyzed to a
solid phase carrier, and measuring and analyzing the
intermolecular interaction on the solid phase carrier ~~by means~~
~~of the interaction.~~

Background Art

15 In ~~research into~~ researching target protein interactions
~~search~~ using an affinity resin, it is important to determine
whether an affinity-bound protein is specific for a ligand or
non-specific. Traditionally, to accomplish this purpose, ~~what~~
~~is called~~ an antagonism experiment that, ~~which~~ comprises
20 adding a non-modified subject ligand to a starting material
protein mixture ~~a non-modified subject ligand~~ in advance or
simultaneously with the addition of the affinity resin, and
confirming the reduction or disappearance of the amount of the
subject protein, has been used ~~commonly~~. Hence, inhibition of
25 the binding of the protein to the affinity resin by the co-
presence of the ligand as an antagonist has been considered to
be an essential condition for the determination ~~judgement~~ that
the protein is specific for the ligand. However, when applying
this method, it is often difficult to dissolve a required
30 amount of ligand in the subject protein mixture~~7~~. This
represents representing a drawback in that such experiments
are substantially unperformable. In particular, when a
pharmaceutical is the subject, ~~because pharmaceuticals which~~
often possesses ~~possess a level of~~ fat solubility (in

particular, orally administrable pharmaceuticals possess ~~not~~
~~lower than a level of~~ fat solubility to ensure membrane
permeability by passive diffusion), a sufficient ligand
concentration cannot be achieved so that experimental studies
5 of proteins found on affinity resins by antagonism experiments
have been abandoned to date. Specifically, to perform an
antagonism experiment, it is necessary to dissolve a
~~concentration of~~ several hundred $\mu\text{g/ml}$ of a ligand (for
example, provided that TOYO-Pearl 10 μl = 1 μmol is used, in
10 the case of a ligand (antagonist) having a molecular weight of
500, a solubility of not less than 0.5 mg/ml is required, even
when an equal amount of drug is present with the ligand on the
resin) in an aqueous solution wherein the protein is present;
generally, it is difficult to dissolve such a high
15 concentration of ligand in a biological material solution
wherein considerable amounts of various ions and solutes such
as proteins are dissolved. This limitation is a problem common
not only to pharmaceuticals but also to compounds that exhibit
interesting pharmacological action in oral administration, for
20 example, environmental substances, toxic substances and the
like, and there has been a demand ~~for a solution for to~~
overcome this limitation ~~as a problem involving in~~ the entire
research into drug discovery target search.

Also, in conventional methods, a ligand is often added
25 in an amount not less than the amount of the ligand on the
resin to secure an antagonistic effect, and this practice is
~~has been posing~~ a major problem of protein denaturation due to
the presence of a ligand at a high concentration of several
mg/ml in a biological material solution such as a lysate. That
30 is, even if band disappearance due to the addition of a ligand
is observed during an antagonism experiment performed to
determine the specificity of an affinity-resin-bound protein
~~found by an affinity experiment~~, it is difficult to determine
whether the observation is due to antagonistic effect or

derived from the inactivation of the protein by the non-specific protein-denaturing effect of the ligand.

Therefore, there has been a method of determining the ligand specificity of a protein that binds to an affinity resin, which enables solving 1) the problem of the solubility of subject ligand, and 2) the problem of the non-specific protein-denaturing effect of the subject ligand added, which have been problematic in conventional antagonism experiments described above.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a method of determining the ligand specificity of a protein that binds to an affinity resin, particularly to provide a method of determining ligand specificity wherein the ~~problem of the~~ solubility of ligand and ~~the problem of~~ the non-specific protein-denaturing effect of the added subject ligand are at issue.

Disclosure of Invention

In view of the above problems, the present inventors conducted various investigations, and found that by performing a step of "pre-treating with a ligand-immobilized affinity resin" in place of "a step of adding an unmodified ligand directly to a protein mixture", ~~which that is the step~~ performed in antagonism experiments for the conventional method, 1) the problem of the solubility of subject ligand, 2) the problem of the non-specific protein-denaturing effect of the subject ligand added, and the like, ~~which have been problematic in the conventional method,~~ can be solved at one time. The present invention establishes ~~established~~ a series of methods of determining ligand specificity, ~~and developed the present invention.~~

In a sample, particularly in a biological sample, a protein that non-specifically binds and is adsorbed to a particular ligand is present, in addition to a protein that specifically binds to the ligand. Against this background, the

present invention relates to a method of determining the ligand specificity of various proteins that bind to a ligand. The present invention is based on the new finding that a protein that specifically binds to a ligand has a high binding
5 constant and preferentially binds to a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier.

Accordingly, the present invention relates to the following:

[1] A method of determining whether or not the binding of a
10 molecule capable of binding to a ligand to the ligand is specific, which comprises the steps shown below;

(1) a step of treating a sample with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier to obtain a treated liquid, and extracting the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier to obtain a
15 ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1,

(2) a step of treating the treated liquid obtained in the previous step with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier (another solid phase carrier wherein the same kind of ligand as the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in the
20 previous step is immobilized) to obtain a treated liquid, and extracting the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier to obtain a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2,

(3) a step of comparing and analyzing the proteins contained
25 in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1 and the proteins contained in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2,

(4) a step of identifying a protein that is detected in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1, and
30 that is not detected in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2 or, even if detected, shows a significantly greater reduction compared to other proteins than in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1, on the basis of the analytical results obtained in

the step (3), and determining the protein to be specific for the ligand.

[2] The method described in [1] above, which comprises repeating the step (2) twice or more.

5 [3] A method of determining whether or not the binding of a molecule capable of binding to a ligand to the ligand is specific, which comprises the steps shown below;

(1) a step of dividing a sample into two portions, and treating one thereof with an inert-substance-immobilized solid
10 phase carrier to obtain a treated liquid,

(2) a step of treating the treated liquid after treatment with the inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier, obtained in the previous step, with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier (another solid phase carrier wherein the same kind of
15 ligand as the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in the step (3) and step (4) described below is immobilized) to obtain a treated liquid, and extracting the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier to obtain a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1,

20 (3) a step of treating the remaining portion of the sample divided into two portions in the step (1) with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier to obtain a treated liquid,
(4) a step of treating the treated liquid after treatment with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier, obtained in the
25 previous step, with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier (another solid phase carrier wherein the same kind of ligand as the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in the previous step (3) is immobilized) to obtain a treated liquid, and extracting the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier
30 to obtain a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2,

(5) a step of comparing and analyzing the proteins contained in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1 and the proteins contained in the ligand-immobilized solid

phase carrier second extract 2,
(6) a step of identifying a protein that is detected in the
ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1, and
that is not detected in the ligand-immobilized solid phase
5 carrier second extract 2 or, even if detected, shows a
significantly greater reduction compared to other proteins
than in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first
extract 1, on the basis of the analytical results obtained in
the step (5), and determining the protein to be specific for
10 the ligand.
[4] The method described in [3] above, wherein the inert
substance is stearic acid.
[5] The method described in [3] above, wherein the inert
substance is structurally similar to the subject ligand, and
15 does not possess the physiological activity possessed by the
ligand.
[6] The method described in [1] or [3] above, wherein the
sample is a biological sample.
[7] The method described in [1] or [3] above, which further
20 comprises a step of calculating the binding constant of the
protein in the sample to the ligand by comparison and analysis.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a drawing schematically showing a mode of an
embodiment of the present invention.

25 Figure 2 is a drawing schematically showing a mode of an
embodiment of the present invention.

Figure 3 is a drawing showing that the binding of a
molecule capable of binding to a ligand ~~to the ligand~~ is
specific (ligand: FK506). In the figure, A to E are the
30 results for optionally chosen proteins that were expected not
to be specific for FK506.

Detailed Description of the Invention

A mode of an embodiment of the present invention is
schematically shown in Figure 1 (mode of embodiment 1).

(1) A step of treating a sample with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier to obtain a treated liquid, and extracting the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier to obtain a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract ~~±~~.

5 The sample used in this step can comprise a substance that specifically binds to the subject ligand, and comprises a plurality of substances. The sample may consist essentially of known compounds, may comprise some novel compounds, and may consist essentially of novel compounds. ~~As the~~ In a sample
10 consisting essentially of known compounds, a mixture of purified proteins prepared by gene engineering using *Escherichia coli* and the like, are included. ~~and the like can be mentioned;~~ A the sample comprising some novel compounds include ~~is~~ a biological sample such as blood, plasma, serum,
15 urine, or a cell or tissue extract or lysate.; ~~As the~~ In a sample consisting essentially of novel compounds, a mixture of novel proteins whose functions and structures are not yet known, or newly synthesized compounds and the like are included ~~can be mentioned~~. When the sample is a mixture,
20 especially when it comprises known compounds, the contents of these compounds in the sample may optionally be set at desired levels in advance, but need not always be determined.

~~As substances that can be contained, various~~ Specificity of various substances such as proteins, nucleic acids, sugars,
25 and lipids can be determined ~~mentioned~~. The proteins encompass complex proteins such as glycoproteins and lipoproteins, as well as simple proteins.

Depending on sample derivation and properties, in the method of solid phase carrier treatment described below and
30 the like, the sample can be diluted ~~used in dilution~~ with an appropriate buffer solution as required. The buffer solution includes but are not limited to the ones that ~~is not subject to limitation, as long as it does~~ do not adversely affect the specific interaction between the ligand and the target

molecule. ~~For~~ For example, physiological saline, phosphate buffer solution, tris-HCl buffer solution and the like are suitable ~~can be mentioned~~, and a stabilizer, an antiseptic and the like may be added if desired.

5 In the present invention, the ligand to be immobilized to the solid phase carrier is not ~~subject to limitation, and may be~~ includes but is not limited to a known compound or a novel compound that will be developed in the future. Also, the ligand may be a low-molecular compound or a high-molecular
10 compound. Here, a low-molecular compound refers to a compound having a molecular weight of less than about 1000; for example, an organic compound commonly usable as a pharmaceutical, a derivative thereof, and an inorganic compound are suitable ~~can be mentioned~~; specifically ~~Specifically~~, a compound produced
15 by ~~means of~~ a method of organic synthesis and the like, a derivative thereof, a naturally occurring compound, a derivative thereof, a small nucleic acid molecule such as a promoter, various metals, and the like are suitable ~~can be mentioned~~; desirably ~~Desirably~~, an organic compound that can
20 be used as a pharmaceutical, a derivative thereof, or a nucleic acid molecule is suitable ~~can be referred to~~. Also, as in addition to the high-molecular compound, a compound having a molecular weight of not less than about 1000, which is e.g., a protein, a polynucleic acid, a polysaccharide, or a
25 combination thereof, and the like are suitable ~~can be mentioned~~, and a A protein is desirable. These low-molecular compounds or high-molecular compounds are commercially available if they are known compounds, or can be obtained via steps such as of collection, production and purification
30 according to various publications. These may be of natural origin, or may be prepared by ~~gene~~ genetic engineering, or may be obtained by semi-synthesis and the like.

Immobilization of a ligand to a solid phase carrier can be performed in accordance with a method commonly performed in

the art. As a convenient and reliable means, a method utilizing an amide bond formation reaction can be mentioned. This reaction can, for example, be performed according to "Peputido Gousei no Kiso to Jikken" (ISBN 4-621-02962-2, 5 Maruzen, 1st edition issued in 1985). Regarding the reagents and solvents used in each reaction, those in common use in the art can be utilized, and are selected ~~as appropriate~~ appropriately depending on the binding reaction employed.

The solid phase carrier used in the present invention 10 includes but is not limited to carriers that allow ~~is not subject to limitation,~~ as long as a specific interaction between the ligand and the target molecule ~~occurs thereon,~~ and those ~~in~~ commonly use used in the art can be utilized, and the solid phase carrier is chosen ~~as~~ appropriately depending on 15 the methods performed to treat ~~with~~ the sample and prepare a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract. As examples of the material, resins (polystyrene, methacrylate resins, polyacrylamide and the like), glass, metals (gold, silver, iron, silicon and the like) and the like can be used. These 20 solid phases may be of any form, and are chosen ~~as~~ appropriately depending on the kind of the above-described material and the method performed for treating ~~with~~ the sample and preparing a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract. For example, plates, beads, thin films, threads, coils and the 25 like can be used ~~mentioned~~.

Treatment of a sample with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier is conveniently performed by mixing the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier and the sample. For example, a bead-like ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier is mixed with 30 a sample (preferably liquid) at 4°C to room temperature with gentle stirring for 30 minutes to overnight. When the sample is not liquid, it is preferably dissolved in an appropriate buffer solution and the like to make it liquid in advance as described above. After the treatment, the ligand-immobilized

solid phase carrier and the sample are separated. This means of separation is also set forth ~~as~~ appropriately depending on the form and material of the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier and the like; for example, when a bead-like solid phase carrier is used, separation by centrifugal operation or filtration is suitable. ~~As the~~ With respect to the conditions of centrifugal operation, various conditions commonly performed in the art are employed. Specifically, centrifugal operation at 4°C to room temperature and 100 to 15000g for 1 second to 10 minutes and filtration ~~operation~~ using a membrane of meshes that do not allow the passage of the solid phase carrier can be used ~~mentioned~~. The supernatant or filtrate and the like obtained through these operations is referred to as a treated liquid.

While obtaining a treated liquid as described above, the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier is extracted from the precipitate or residue obtained by centrifugal operation or filtration ~~operation, that is,~~ of the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier, to yield a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract. The ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract obtained by first treating the sample with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier is referred to as "ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract ~~±~~" for convenience.

With respect to ~~As~~ the method of extracting the protein bound onto the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier, various methods commonly performed in the art can be utilized. ~~± this~~ This extraction is performed by, for example, treating the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier with a surfactant-containing extract. ~~As the surfactant, sodium~~ Sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS), polyoxyethylene sorbitan monolaurate (for example, trade name: Tween 20), polyoxyethylene(9)octylphenyl ether (for example, trade name NP-40) and the like can be ~~mentioned~~ used as surfactants. As described below, when using

SDS-PAGE for protein detection, it is suitable to directly extract the protein with an SDS-containing sample buffer for SDS-PAGE.

(2) ~~A step of treating the~~ The treated liquid obtained in the previous step (step (1)) is treated with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier to obtain a treated liquid, and ~~extracting~~ the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier is extracted to obtain a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2.

10 The ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in this step is another solid phase carrier wherein the same kind of ligand as the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in the previous step (step (1)) is immobilized.

Treatment of the treated liquid with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier is performed in the same
15 manner as the treatment of the sample with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier performed in the step (1), and is conveniently performed by mixing the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier and the treated liquid. For example, a
20 bead-like ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier is mixed with the treated liquid at 4°C to room temperature with gentle stirring for 30 minutes to overnight. After the treatment, the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier and the treated liquid are separated. This means of separation is also set forth ~~as~~
25 ~~appropriate~~ appropriately depending on the form and material of the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier and the like. ~~for~~ For example, when a bead-like solid phase carrier is used, separation by centrifugal operation or filtration is suitable. With respect to ~~As~~ the conditions of centrifugal operation,
30 various conditions commonly performed in the art are employed. Specifically, centrifugal operation at 4°C to room temperature and 100 to 15000g for 1 second to 10 minutes and filtration operation using a membrane of meshes that do not allow the passage of the solid phase carrier can be performed ~~mentioned~~.

From the precipitate or residue obtained by centrifugal operation or filtration operation, that is, a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier, the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier is extracted, to yield a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract. A ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract obtained by treating the treated liquid with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier is referred to as "ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2" for convenience. When this step is repeated twice or more, a plurality of portions of ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2 are obtained depending on the number of repeats. To prevent confusion in such cases, the portions may be distinguished from each other by designating as ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract 2a, 2b, 2c... and the like.

The method of extracting the protein bound onto the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier in this step is the same as the method performed in the previous step (step (1)).

(3) A step of comparing and analyzing the proteins contained in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1 and the proteins contained in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2.

This step can employ an ordinary method of protein analysis. For example, analysis by SDS-PAGE is convenient. By subjecting the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1 and the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2 to SDS-PAGE under the same conditions, and comparing the electrophoretic patterns obtained, protein differences in the individual extracts can be examined.

(4) ~~A step of identifying a~~ A protein that is detected in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract 1, and that is not detected in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract 2 or, even if detected, shows a significantly greater reduction compared to other proteins

than in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first
extract ~~4~~, on the basis of the analytical results obtained in
the step (3), ~~and determining the protein~~ is determined to be
specific for the ligand.

5 This step is based on the finding obtained in the
invention of this application that proteins of higher
specificity (proteins having higher binding constants) are
more likely to be lost from the sample (or treated liquid)
during the first ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier
10 treatment. To "show a significantly greater reduction compared
to other proteins than in the ligand-immobilized solid phase
carrier first extract ~~4~~" is visually determinable, and can be
determined by a statistical process commonly performed in the
art (for example, a comparison of overall protein content
15 changes and the reduction rate of the content of a particular
protein).

Furthermore, another mode of embodiment of the present
invention is shown in Figure 2. This mode of embodiment
comprises a step of treating with a solid phase carrier
20 wherein an inert substance is immobilized. This mode of
embodiment is described below (mode of embodiment 2).

(1) A ~~step of dividing a sample~~ is divided into two portions,
and treating one thereof with an inert-substance-immobilized
solid phase carrier to obtain a treated liquid.

25 The sample used in this step is the same as described
above. The sample is divided into two portions in advance, one
of which is used in this step, and the remaining portion is
used in ~~the~~ step (3) described below. For ~~performing~~
comparison and analysis in the step (5), the portions of
30 sample serving as the starting materials for the step (1) and
the step (3) need to be identical (that is, having the same
composition), and the sample is therefore preferably divided
into two portions in advance. ~~Provided that~~ If the ligand-
specific molecule is capable of binding onto the ligand-

immobilized solid phase carrier, the sample may be divided into two equal amounts of portions, and may be divided into two mutually different amounts of portions.

The inert substance immobilized onto a solid phase carrier in the present invention includes ~~is~~, for example, a substance other than the ligand for which a target molecule is searched, and is a substance that does not possess the physiological activity possessed by the ligand. Because the inert substance is expected to exhibit nearly the same behavior as the ligand with regard to non-specific protein adsorption, the inert substance is more preferably a substance similar to the ligand in terms of characteristic functional group and core. For example, provided that the ligand for which a target molecule is searched is a substance exhibiting anti-inflammatory effect, the inert substance is a substance that does not exhibit anti-inflammatory effect, preferably a structurally similar substance with similar physicochemical properties. ~~Provided that~~ If the information on the structure-activity relationship of the ligand is available in advance and utilizable, it is possible to select an inert substance ~~as appropriate~~ appropriately according to the information, and prepare a solid phase carrier wherein the inert substance is immobilized. Meanwhile, if no such information is available in advance, a hydrophobic substance that is expected to normally produce non-specific protein adsorption may be immobilized. As an example ~~examples of the~~ a hydrophobic substance, stearic acid and the like can be used ~~mentioned~~. Degree of hydrophobicity can generally be expressed by a hydrophobicity parameter; in the present invention, the hydrophobicity of "hydrophobic substance" can be defined by a partition coefficient, specifically LOGP. In calculating LOGP, CLOGP (a predicted value obtained using a software program for estimating a hydrophobicity parameter of a compound by ~~means of~~ ~~a computer~~) can be calculated using, for example,

Corwin/Leo's program (CLOGP, Daylight Chemical Information System Co., Ltd.)) and the like are conveniently utilized, but the hydrophobicity parameter is not limited to CLOGP. The greater the CLOGP ~~is~~, the higher the hydrophobicity is. In
5 ~~view of the accomplishment of the object of~~ removing non-specific substances, the LOGP of the hydrophobic substance of the present invention is 4 or more, preferably 6 or more, calculated as CLOGP. If the LOGP is less than 4, no sufficient non-specific substance removal effect is obtained. Also, the
10 greater the LOGP ~~is~~, the higher the hydrophobicity is, although a substance possessing such high hydrophobicity is suitable for achieving an ~~the accomplishment of the~~ object of the present invention, wherein the effect thereof does not increase remarkably even if it exceeds about 20, calculated as
15 CLOGP. ~~and from~~ From the viewpoint of the ease of synthesis, the CLOGP is normally not more than 20. Also, because the problem resides in the non-specific interactions based on hydrophobic interactions on the solid phase carrier, degree of the hydrophobicity of "hydrophobic substance" may be defined
20 more strictly as the hydrophobicity in a state immobilized on the solid phase carrier, that is, for the entire hydrophobic-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier.

The hydrophobic substance used in the present invention is not limited ~~subject to limitation~~, as long as it possesses
25 the above-described properties; such as for example, it has an LOGP of 4 or more, preferably 6 or more, calculated as CLOGP. More specifically, the hydrophobic substance is at least ~~kind~~ selected from the group consisting of undecanoic acid, myristic acid, palmitic acid, linoleic acid, arachidonic acid, linolenic acid, oleic acid, stearic acid, 9-(naphthalen-1-yl)-nonanic acid, dodecanesulfonic acid, octadecanesulfonic acid and hexadecanesulfonic acid, preferably at least one ~~kind~~
30 selected from the group consisting of myristic acid, palmitic acid, linoleic acid, arachidonic acid, linolenic acid, oleic

acid, stearic acid, octadecanesulfonic acid and hexadecanesulfonic acid, and particularly preferably stearic acid or octadecanesulfonic acid.

The above-described "hydrophobic substance" is commercially available if it is a known substance, or can be prepared according to various publications. If the "hydrophobic substance" is a novel substance, it can be prepared ~~as appropriate~~ appropriately by utilizing various reactions in organic synthesis commonly performed in the art.

The "inert substance" used in the present invention is also commercially available if it is a known substance, or can be prepared according to various publications. If the "inert substance" is a novel substance, it can be prepared ~~as appropriate~~ appropriately by utilizing various reactions in organic synthesis commonly performed in the art. In the case of a novel substance, it is confirmed in advance not to possess the desired physiological activity, and preferably to be structurally similar to the test subject ligand and have similar physicochemical properties.

With respect to ~~As~~ the solid phase carrier for immobilizing an "inert substance" such as a hydrophobic substance, those ~~in common use~~ available in the art can be used suitably. As examples of the material, resins (polystyrene, methacrylate resins, polyacrylamide and the like), glass, metals (gold, silver, iron, silicon and the like) and the like can be used. These solid phase carriers may be of any form, and are chosen ~~as appropriate~~ appropriately depending on the kind of the above-described material and the method later performed to analyze intermolecular specific interactions. For example, plates, beads, thin films, threads, coils and the like can be used ~~mentioned~~; beads consisting of a resin that simplify the subsequent operation when packed in a column are suitable, and metallic thin films and glass plates are also suitable.

Immobilization of an inert substance to the solid phase carrier is performed by known methods commonly performed in the art and appropriate combinations thereof. ~~For~~ For example, immobilization by covalent bonds or non-covalent bonds such as
5 amide bonds, Schiff base formation, C-C bonds, ester bonds, hydrogen bonds, and hydrophobic interactions can be performed ~~mentioned~~. All these are performed using materials and reactions known in the art. Each binding is performed by utilizing a reaction commonly performed in the art. As a
10 convenient and reliable means, a method utilizing an amide bond formation reaction can be mentioned. This reaction can, for example, be performed according to "Peptido Gousei no Kiso to Jikken" (ISBN 4-621-02962-2, Maruzen, 1st edition issued in 1985). Regarding the reagents and solvents used in
15 each reaction, those in common use in the relevant field can be utilized, and are chosen ~~as appropriate~~ appropriately depending on the binding reaction employed. Whether or not the hydrophobic substance has been immobilized to the solid phase carrier can, for example, be confirmed from the reaction rate
20 determined by a quantification ~~quantitation~~ (for example, the ninhydrin test) of amino groups on the solid phase carrier surface before and after the reaction.

Treatment of a sample with an inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier is conveniently performed by
25 mixing the inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier and the sample. For example, a bead-like inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier is mixed with a sample (preferably liquid) at 4°C to room temperature with gentle stirring for 30 minutes to overnight. When the sample is not
30 liquid, it is preferably dissolved in an appropriate buffer solution and the like to make it liquid in advance as described above. After the treatment, the inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier and the sample are separated. This means of separation is also set forth ~~as appropriate~~

appropriately depending on the form and material of the inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier and the like.~~7~~ for example, when a bead-like solid phase carrier is used, separation by centrifugal operation or filtration is suitable.

5 With respect to ~~As~~ the conditions of centrifugal operation, various conditions commonly performed in the art are employed. Specifically, centrifugal operation at 4°C to room temperature and 100 to 15000g for 1 second to 10 minutes and filtration operation using a membrane of meshes that do not allow the

10 passage of the solid phase carrier can be performed ~~mentioned~~. The supernatant or filtrate obtained through these treatments is referred to as a treated liquid. Note that although the method and procedures for the above-described treatment can be performed ~~as appropriate~~ appropriately as described above, it

15 is preferable, from the viewpoint of comparison, that they be performed under the same conditions using the same method and procedures as the treatment of ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier and sample (or treated liquid) described below.

(2) ~~A step of treating the~~ The treated liquid after treatment

20 with the inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier, obtained in the previous step (step (1)), is treated with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier to obtain a treated liquid, and ~~extracting~~ the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier is extracted to obtain a ligand-immobilized solid

25 phase carrier first extract 4.

The ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in this step is another solid phase carrier wherein the same kind of ligand as the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in the steps described below (step (3) and step (4)) is

30 immobilized.

Treatment of the treated liquid with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier can be performed in the same manner as the treatment of the sample with the inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier performed in the

step (1). After the treatment, the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier is extracted to yield a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract ~~1~~. This procedure can also be performed using the same conditions and procedures as those
5 described in detail in the mode of an embodiment 1.

(3) A step of treating the sample with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier ~~to yield~~ yields a treated liquid.

The sample used in this step is the remaining portion of the sample divided into two portions in the step (1) above.

10 The ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in this step is another solid phase carrier wherein the same kind of ligand as the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier used in the step (2) is immobilized, and can be prepared in the same manner as the "ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier"
15 described in detail in the mode of embodiment 1. Also, treatment of the sample with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier and recovery of the treated liquid can also be performed in the same manner as the treatment performed in the above-described mode of embodiment 1.

20 ~~(4) A step of treating the~~ The treated liquid after treatment with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier, obtained in the previous step (step (3)), is treated with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier (another solid phase carrier wherein the same kind of ligand as the ligand-immobilized
25 solid phase carrier used in the previous step (3) is immobilized) to obtain a treated liquid, and ~~extracting~~ the protein bound onto the solid phase carrier is extracted to obtain a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract ~~2~~.

30 A series of operations such as treatment of the treated liquid with the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier, recovery of the treated liquid and extraction of the protein bound to the solid phase carrier to yield a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier second extract ~~2~~, are performed in

accordance with the above-described mode of embodiment 1.

(5) A step of comparing and analyzing the proteins contained in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier first extract ~~±~~ and the proteins contained in the ligand-immobilized solid
5 phase carrier second extract 2 is performed.

This step can employ an ordinary method of protein analysis. For example, analysis by SDS-PAGE is convenient. By subjecting the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract 1 and the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract 2 to
10 SDS-PAGE under the same conditions, and comparing the electrophoretic patterns obtained, protein differences in the individual extracts can be examined.

(6) A ~~step of identifying a~~ protein that is detected in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract 1, and that is
15 not detected in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract 2 or, even if detected, shows a significantly greater reduction compared to other proteins than in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract 1, on the basis of the analytical results obtained in the step (5), ~~and determining~~
20 ~~the protein~~ is determined to be specific for the ligand.

This step, as in the mode of embodiment 1, is based on the finding obtained in the invention of this application that proteins of higher specificity (proteins having higher binding constants) are more likely to be ~~lost~~ removed from the sample
25 (or treated liquid) during the first ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier treatment. That is, even when the sample is treated with an inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier in advance, the ligand-specific protein is ~~does not disappear~~ removed from the sample. ~~± on~~ To the contrary, the
30 ratio of ligand-specific protein in the sample increases (the non-specific proteins in the sample are removed by treatment with inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier). Meanwhile, when pretreatment with an inert-substance-immobilized solid phase carrier is not performed, as is

evident from the mode of embodiment 1, the first ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier treatment causes the ligand-specific protein to be removed ~~disappear~~ from the sample (that is, the ligand-specific protein binds to the immobilized solid phase carrier used for the treatment, hence the ligand-specific protein is contained at high concentrations in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract obtained after the first ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier treatment).

To "show a significantly greater reduction compared to other proteins than in the ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier extract 1" is visually determinable, and can be determined by a statistical process commonly performed in the art (for example, a comparison of overall protein content changes and the reduction rate of the content of a particular protein).

When a more quantitative determination is ~~wanted~~ required in determining whether or not a particular protein is ligand-specific using the method of the present invention, a step of calculating the binding constant of the protein to the ligand may be included in the above-described series of steps.

~~As the~~ For a method of calculating the binding constant, a method commonly performed in the art can be used. ~~For~~ For example, ELISA experiments using a labeled ligand, experiments using BIACORE (see Analytical Chemistry (1999), 71, 777-790 by Whiteside et al. and the like) and the like, and the like can be performed ~~mentioned~~.

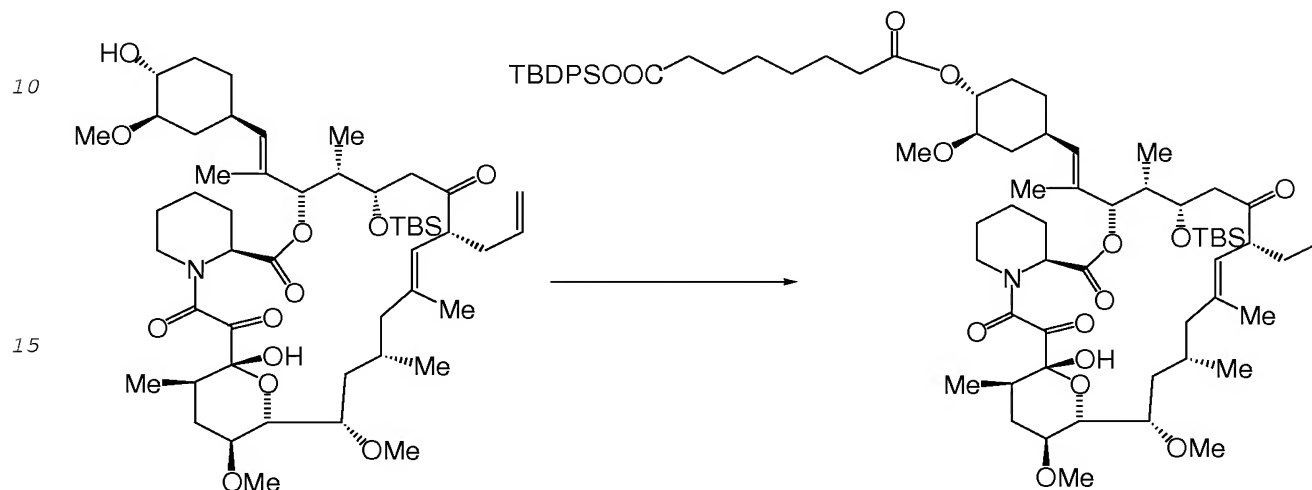
Examples

The present invention is hereinafter described in more detail by ~~means of~~ the following examples, which ~~examples~~, however, are not to be construed as limiting the scope of the present invention. Also, the individual compounds, reagents and the like used are commercially available or can be prepared on the basis of published reports and the like unless otherwise stated.

Preparation of ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier

Production Example 1: Synthesis of 17-allyl-14-(tert-butyl-dimethyl-silanyloxy)-1-hydroxy-12-{2-[4-(7-(tert-butyl-

5 dimethyl-silanyloxy-carbonyl)heptanoyl-oxy)-3-methoxy-cyclohexyl]-1-methyl-vinyl}-23,25-dimethoxy-13,19,21,27-tetramethyl-11,28-diox-4-aza-tricyclo[22.3.1.0^{4,9}]octacos-18-ene-2,3,10,16-tetraone



20 A mixture of 17-allyl-14-(tert-butyl-dimethyl-silanyloxy)-1-hydroxy-12-[2-(4-hydroxy-3-methoxy-cyclohexyl)-1-methyl-vinyl]-23,25-dimethoxy-13,19,21,27-tetramethyl-11,28-diox-4-aza-tricyclo[22.3.1.0^{4,9}]octacos-18-ene-2,3,10,16-tetraone (FK506; 138 mg, 0.15 mmol), O-mono(tert-butyl-

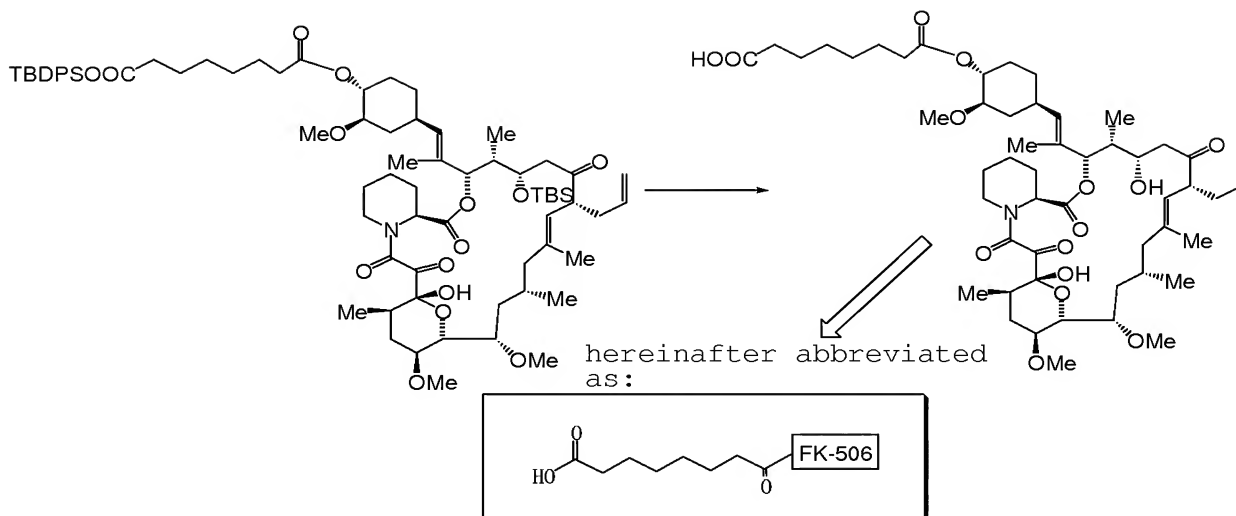
25 dimethyl-silanyl)octanedioic acid (86.7 mg, 0.218 mmol), dimethylaminopyridine (DMAP; 16.5 mg, 0.098 mmol), 1-[3-(dimethylamino)propyl]-3-ethylcarbodiimide hydrochloride (EDC/HCl; 69.1 mg, 0.261 mmol) and methylene chloride (CH₂Cl₂; 1 ml) was stirred at room temperature for 1.5 hours. The

30 reaction product was poured over an ethyl acetate-water mixed liquid and extracted. The organic phase obtained was washed with water and saline, after which it was dried with magnesium sulfate (MgSO₄). After the MgSO₄ was separated by filtration, concentration under reduced pressure was conducted. The

residue thus obtained was purified using a silica gel column (eluted with 20% AcOEt (in n-hexane)) to yield the desired 17-allyl-14-(tert-butyl-dimethyl-silanyloxy)-1-hydroxy-12-{2-[4-(7-(tert-butyl-dimethyl-silanyloxy-carbonyl)heptanoyl-oxy)-3-methoxy-cyclohexyl]-1-methyl-vinyl}-23,25-dimethoxy-
5 13,19,21,27-tetramethyl-11,28-diox-4-aza-tricyclo[22.3.1.0^{4,9}]octacos-18-ene-2,3,10,16-tetraone (44 mg, 24.6%).

¹H-NMR(CDCl₃) δ : -0.1-0.1(12H,m), 0.7-2.6(47H,m), 0.85 and
10 0.86(18H,s), 1.50(3H,s), 1.63(3H,s), 2.75(1H,m), 3.31(3H,s),
3.35(3H,s), 3.39(3H,s), 4.05(1H,m), 3.0-4.4(6H), 4.5-5.8(9H,m).

Production Example 2: Synthesis of 17-allyl-1,14-di-hydroxy-12-{2-[4-(7-carboxy-heptanoyl-oxy)-3-methoxy-cyclohexyl]-1-methyl-vinyl}-23,25-dimethoxy-13,19,21,27-tetramethyl-11,28-dioxa-4-aza-tricyclo[22.3.1.0^{4,9}]octacos-18-ene-2,3,10,16-tetraone
15



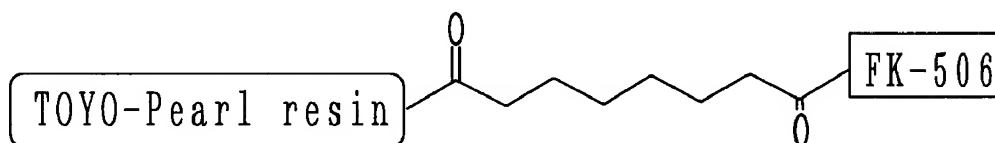
To a mixture of the 17-allyl-14-(tert-butyl-dimethyl-silanyloxy)-1-hydroxy-12-{2-[4-(7-(tert-butyl-dimethyl-silanyloxy-carbonyl)heptanoyl-oxy)-3-methoxy-cyclohexyl]-1-methyl-vinyl}-23,25-dimethoxy-13,19,21,27-tetramethyl-11,28-dioxa-4-aza-tricyclo[22.3.1.0^{4,9}]octacos-18-ene-2,3,10,16-tetraone prepared in Production Example 1 (44 mg, 0.037 mmol) and acetonitrile (0.88 ml), 46 to 48% aqueous hydrogen fluoride (HF) (0.12 ml) was gently added; this was followed by overnight stirring at room temperature. The reaction product was poured over an ethyl acetate-water mixed liquid and extracted. The organic phase obtained was washed with water and saline, after which it was dried with magnesium sulfate (MgSO₄). After the MgSO₄ was separated by filtration, concentration under reduced pressure was conducted. The residue thus obtained was purified using a silica gel column (5% methanol (in chloroform)) to yield the desired 17-allyl-1,14-di-hydroxy-12-{2-[4-(7-carboxy-heptanoyl-oxy)-3-methoxy-cyclohexyl]-1-methyl-vinyl}-23,25-dimethoxy-13,19,21,27-tetramethyl-11,28-dioxa-4-aza-tricyclo[22.3.1.0^{4,9}]octacos-18-ene-2,3,10,16-tetraone (14.2 mg, 40%).

¹H-NMR(CDCl₃)δ: 0.7-2.6(47H,m), 1.50(3H,s), 1.63(3H,s), 2.75(1H,m), 3.31(3H,s), 3.35(3H,s), 3.39(3H,s), 4.05(1H,m),

3.0-4.4(6H), 4.5-5.8(11H,m).

MS(m/z): 960(M⁺)

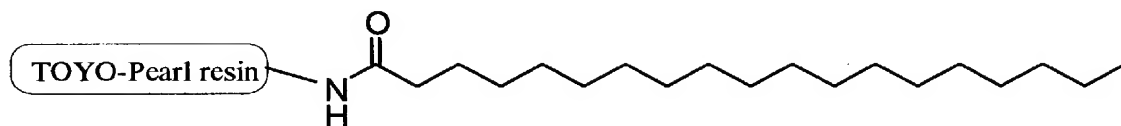
Production Example 3: Synthesis of FK506-bound TOYO-Pearl
5 resin (TOYO-Pearl resin; TSKgel AF-amino)



A mixture of the 17-allyl-1,14-di-hydroxy-12-{2-[4-(7-carboxy-heptanoyl-oxy)-3-methoxy-cyclohexyl]-1-methyl-vinyl}-23,25-dimethoxy-13,19,21,27-tetramethyl-11,28-dioxa-4-aza-
10 tricyclo[22.3.1.0^{4,9}]octacos-18-ene-2,3,10,16-tetraone prepared in Production Example 2 (38.4 mg, 0.04 mmol), TOYO-Pearl resin (TSKgel AF-amino, 100 μ l, free amino group (available amino group) content 0.01 mmol; manufactured by Tosoh Corporation), EDC/HCl (9.2 mg, 0.048 mmol), 1-hydroxybenzotriazole (HOBt;
15 6.5 mg, 0.048 mmol) and dimethylformamide (DMF; 1 ml) was stirred at room temperature for 6 hours. The reaction end point was confirmed ~~as the time~~ when no residual amino groups became visually observable by the ninhydrin reaction. The reaction rate ~~at this time~~ was calculated to be about 24%
20 (estimated ligand concentration = 24 μ mol/ml). After confirmation of completion of the reaction, the resin was washed with DMF five times. Acetic anhydride (100 μ l) and DMF (400 μ l) were added thereto, and this was followed by stirring at room temperature for 1 hour. Subsequently, the resin was
25 thoroughly washed with DMF, and the FK506-bound TOYO-Pearl resin obtained was used in the binding experiments described below.

Preparation of hydrophobic-substance-immobilized solid phase
30 carrier

Production Example 4: Synthesis of stearic-acid-immobilized resin [TOYO + stearic acid]



Stearic acid was immobilized to TOYO-Pearl resin (TSKgel
5 AF-amino). To 100 μ l of the TOYO-Pearl resin, stearic acid
(11.38 mg, 0.04 mmol) dissolved in a mixed solvent of DMF
(0.25 ml) and dichloromethane (0.25 ml) was added;
benzotriazol-1-yl-oxy-tris-pyrrolidino-phosphonium
hexafluorophosphate (PyBOP; 26 mg, 0.05 mmol) and N,N-
10 diisopropylethylamine (17 μ l, 0.10 mmol) were further added,
and this was followed by shaking at room temperature for 4
hours. After completion of the reaction, the resin was
thoroughly washed with DMF, after which the percent
condensation yield was determined by the ninhydrin test (about
15 91%).

Example 1

(1-1) Preparation of lysate

The rat brain (2.2 g) was mixed in a mixture A (0.25 M
20 sucrose, 25 mM Tris buffer (pH 7.4), 22 ml) and prepared as a
homogenate, which was then centrifuged at 9500 rpm for 10
minutes. The centrifugal supernatant was collected and further
centrifuged at 50000 rpm for 30 minutes. The supernatant thus
obtained was used as the lysate. Note that all experiments
25 were performed at 4°C or on ice.

(1-2) Binding experiments (invention of this application)

Lysate-binding experiments were performed per the
procedures shown below using the FK506-bound affinity resin
30 synthesized in Production Example 3 and the stearic-acid-
immobilized resin prepared in Production Example 4. Note that

the lysate was used after being diluted with the mixture A at a dilution rate of 1/2.

Each resin (10 μ l) and the lysate (1 ml) were gently shaken at 4°C for about 1 hour. Thereafter, centrifugal
5 operation was performed, and each supernatant was collected carefully. Then, each supernatant was again mixed with a fresh supply of the FK506-bound resin (10 μ l). After the mixture was gently stirred for about 3 hours, centrifugal operation was performed, and the supernatant was removed. The FK506-bound
10 resin obtained was gently washed with the mixture A about 5 times to remove substances other than the protein bound onto the resin to the maximum possible extent.

To each FK506-bound resin thus obtained, 25 μ l of a loading buffer for SDS (nakalai cat. NO = 30566-22, sample
15 buffer solution for electrophoresis with 2-ME (2-mercaptoethanol) (2x) for SDS PAGE) was added; this was followed by stirring at 25°C for 10 minutes. The sample solution thus obtained was separated using a commercially available SDS gel (BioRad readyGel J, 15% SDS, cat. NO = 161-
20 J341), and the SDS gel was analyzed.

As a result, compared to the first resin treatment performed with the stearic-acid-immobilized resin, the treatment with the FK506-bound resin showed that the band of FKBP12, which is considered to specifically bind onto the
25 FK506-bound resin, decreased evidently, and antagonism was observed.

Note that this result was very similar to the result from ordinary experiments (conventional method) described below.

30

(1-3) Binding experiments (conventional method)

Binding experiments were performed by a conventional method using the FK506-bound affinity resin synthesized in Production Example 3. Note that the same lysate as prepared in

Example 2 was used in divided portions.

Two portions of the FK506-bound affinity resin synthesized in Production Example 3 (10 μ l, FK506 content about 0.24 μ mol) were provided; one portion was mixed with
5 lysate (1 ml), 10 μ l of DMSO was added (to ensure the same conditions as the experiments described below), and the mixture was gently shaken at 4°C for about 1 hour. The lysate used for the other portion was obtained by adding 10 μ l (0.35 μ mol, about 1.5 times the amount of ligand on the resin) of a
10 solution of FK506 (2.83 mg) dissolved in 100 μ l of DMSO in advance before mixing with the resin, and gently stirring the solution for 1 hour. Note that a prior survey had confirmed that the addition of these amounts of DMSO and FK506 did not cause protein denaturation or aggregation like those described
15 above. After each mixture was gently stirred for about 3 hours, centrifugal operation was performed, and the supernatant was removed. The FK506-bound resin obtained was washed carefully with the mixture A about 5 times to remove substances other than the protein bound onto the resin to the maximum possible
20 extent.

To each FK506-bound resin thus obtained, 25 μ l of a loading buffer for SDS (nakalai cat. NO = 30566-22, sample buffer solution for electrophoresis with 2-ME (2-mercaptoethanol) (2x) for SDS PAGE) was added, and this was
25 followed by stirring at 25°C for 10 minutes. The sample solution thus obtained was separated using a commercially available SDS gel (BioRad readyGel J, 15% SDS, cat. NO = 161-J341), and the SDS gel was analyzed.

As a result, the band of FKBP12, which is considered to
30 specifically bind onto the resin, disappeared when the antagonist FK506 was added in advance, and antagonism was observed.

(1-4) Binding experiments (invention of this application)

Note that the same results as "(1-2) Binding experiments" above can also be obtained with the procedures shown below.

Lysate-binding experiments were performed using the
5 FK506-bound affinity resin synthesized in Production Example 3 per the procedures shown below. Note that the lysate was used after being diluted with the mixture A at a dilution rate of 1/2.

The resin (10 μ l) and the lysate (1 ml) were gently
10 shaken at 4°C for about 1 hour. Thereafter, centrifugal operation was performed, and each supernatant was collected carefully. At this time, the separated FK506-bound resin was kept to stand at 4°C as the first binding experiment resin. Then, each supernatant was again mixed with a fresh supply of
15 the FK506-bound resin (10 μ l). After the mixture was gently stirred for about 3 hours, centrifugal operation was performed, and the supernatant was removed. Subsequently, the FK506-bound resin obtained in the second binding experiment and the resin obtained in the first binding experiment were gently washed
20 with the mixture A about 5 times to remove substances other than the protein bound onto the resin to the maximum possible extent. To each FK506-bound resin thus obtained, 25 μ l of a loading buffer for SDS (nakalai cat. NO = 30566-22, sample buffer solution for electrophoresis with 2-ME (2-
25 mercaptoethanol) (2x) for SDS PAGE) was added, and this was followed by stirring at 25°C for 10 minutes. The sample solution thus obtained was separated using a commercially available SDS gel (BioRad readyGel J, 15% SDS, cat. NO = 161-J341), and the SDS gel was analyzed.

30 As a result, on the resin obtained in the first binding experiment, nearly the same results as the results from the stearic-acid-immobilized resin treatment in "(1-2) Binding experiments" above were obtained, and from the resin obtained in the second binding experiment, nearly the same results as

the results from the FK506-bound resin treatment in "(1-2) Binding experiments" above were obtained. Note that these results were very similar to the results described in "(1-2) Binding experiments (invention of this application)" and "(1-3) Binding experiments (conventional method)" above.

The results from a total of up to six repeats of the procedure described in (1-4) are shown in Figure 3. As shown in Figure 3, a band of FKBP12, which is known to specifically bind to FK506, which was used as the ligand, was present ~~confirmed~~ only after the first operation and not at all present ~~confirmed~~ after the second operation and beyond. Also, the binding amounts of other proteins considered to be non-specific proteins, such as tubulin and actin, were nearly constant irrespective of the number of repeats of the operation.

Industrial Applicability

In target search using an affinity resin, antagonism experiments play an important role in confirming determining the specificity of the bands observed. The invention of this application provides one technique for antagonism experiments, which is free of the problem of the solubility of subject ligand, that has conventionally been a matter of concern, and which is associated with less problems of the non-specific protein denaturing effect by the subject ligand to be added. This technique is considered to serve as a basic technology for research into affinity resins.

This application is based on a patent application No. 2003-354503 filed in Japan, the contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference.

Abstract

~~In a~~ A method to determine specificity of ligand binding
includes ~~comprising~~ comparing a solid phase carrier first
5 extract 1 obtained by pre-treating a sample with a ligand-
immobilized solid phase carrier and a solid phase carrier
second extract 2 obtained by treating the pretreated sample
again with a ligand-immobilized solid phase carrier in terms
of the proteins contained therein, and identifying a protein
10 whose content is remarkably decreased in the second extract 2
compared to the first extract 1, in order to solve 1) the
problem of the solubility of subject ligand, 2) the problem of
the non-specific protein-denaturing effect of the subject
ligand added, and the like, ~~which have been problematic in~~
15 ~~antagonism experiments in target search using an affinity~~
~~resin, have been solved.~~